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MOSSA
STAR WARS
SCREAMING CITADEL
STAR WARS
SCREAMING CITADEL
PART 1 OF 5
STAR WARS
SCREAMING CITADEL

THE SCREAMING CITADEL

Book I, Part I

It is a time of turmoil for the galaxy. While the evil Galactic Empire remains strong, the forces of the Rebel Alliance continue to struggle for freedom from their oppressive grasp, establishing a secret outpost on Horox III, deep in the Outer Rim.

Young rebel pilot Luke Skywalker, struggling to forge his destiny, is at a loss. He can feel the Force, but without the proper training, he cannot become the Jedi Knight he is certain he must become.

Meanwhile, the rogue archaeologist and sometime scoundrel Doctor Aphra has come into possession of a very valuable – and very dangerous – artifact... one containing the recorded consciousness of an ancient Force user. If only she could reactivate it....

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Horox III,
The Outer Rim.

HMMMHH.
BAD MISTAKE. THIS ISN'T A HUMAN BAR.
THE SORT OF MISTAKE YOU DON'T WALK AWAY FROM. CRAWL, MAYBE...
I WANT SOME TIME ALONE TO THINK.
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU.
LIFE IS DISAPPOINTING, HUMAN.
PREPARE FOR A BEATING.
TRUST ME. KNOWING WHO I HAVE TO FIGHT EVENTUALLY, I'M NOT PARTICULARLY WORRIED ABOUT A COUPLE OF GUYS LIKE YOU...
OKAY, LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH...
HEY!

HE'S WITH ME.
DOCTOR APHRA.
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M *THE* DOCTOR APHRA, AND I--

OOPH!
SHE'S THE ONE WHO STOLE THE UR-THARN PROCESSORS!
OH, YEAH. THAT.
SHE PAYS!

THANKS, KID.
THIS...
...THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.
TWO PEOPLE VERSUS A BAR IS BAD.
YEAH...
...BUT TWO PEOPLE AND A WOOKIEE VERSUS A BAR?
THAT'S WHAT I CALL THE START OF A GREAT WEEKEND.

Shortly...
THAT WENT WELL.
REALLY?
THANK YOU, BUT...YOU HELP ME AND I END UP IN A FIGHT AGAINST EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THE PLACE!
IN WHAT WORLD IS THAT "WELL"?
PLUS, YOU... YOU WORKED FOR DARTH VADER.
YOU'RE EVIL.
I USED TO WORK FOR DARTH VADER.
AND...WELL, "EVIL" IS A VERY STRONG WORD.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, BUT I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU.
DON'T EVEN THINK OF FOLLOWING ME.
THAT'S TOO BAD, WANNABE PADAWAN...
...'CAUSE GUESS WHO KNOWS WHERE YOU CAN FIND A JEDI MASTER?

STAR WARS
SCREAMING CITADEL

HOW DO YOU KNOW I'M A--
I MEAN, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M A JEDI?
YOU'RE LEARNING, KID.
DON'T CALL ME "KID." HAN DOES THAT, AND I HATE IT.
REALLY? OOF. I WON'T.
OKAY, WHEN I WAS WORKING FOR TALL, DARK, AND GENOCIDAL...
...YOU WERE MORE THAN JUST A RANDOM REBEL TO HIM.
AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS REVENGE. "OH NO, HE'S BLOWN UP MY BOSS' OVERSIZED TRAINING DRONE."
I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT. HE'S A DARK LORD OF THE SITH. OVERWHELMING PASSION IS WHAT THEY DO...BUT HE DIDN'T WANT YOU DEAD. HE DEFINITELY WANTED YOU ALIVE.
NOW, I THOUGHT "THERE'S ALWAYS TORTURE..." BUT THAT'S NOT THE VIBE I GOT.
THE AMOUNT OF EFFORT...WAS CONSIDERABLE. WHY?
SO, I LOOKED INTO WHAT YOU DID TO THE DEATH STAR. THAT SHOT...
...ONE IN A MILLION.
AT LEAST.

YOU REALLY DO SOUND LIKE HAN.
PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT.
OKAY--I UNDERSTAND. I'M A GOOD SHOT AND A GOOD PILOT, BUT I DON'T SEE WHY YOU THINK THAT MAKES ME A JEDI.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE THAT GOOD. I KNOW PEOPLE WHO'VE TRAINED FROM BIRTH, AND THEY COULDN'T HAVE MADE THAT SHOT. YOU'RE A FLUFFY-HAIRED FARM BOY.
YOU'VE BASICALLY TAUGHT YOURSELF, AND YOU'RE ASTOUNDING.
IMAGINE...
...WHAT YOU COULD BE LIKE IF YOU HAD SOME ACTUAL JEDI TRAINING.
TAP! TAP!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
IT'S AN ARTIFACT I RECOVERED FROM AN ANCIENT JEDI TEMPLE. THE ORDU ASPECTU. IT'S THE ARCHIVED PERSONALITY OF A JEDI CALLED RUR.
FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF ARCHAEOLOGY, I WANT TO REACTIVATE IT.
I...I'M NOT SURE HOW I CAN DO THAT.
YOU CAN'T. I KNOW WHO CAN. THE QUEEN OF KTATH'ATN--AND DON'T TRY TO PRONOUNCE THAT. SHE'S VERY OLD, AND VERY GOOD, AND BORED.
ONCE A YEAR, SHE SWAPS FAVORS FOR MEETING INTERESTING ORGANIC LIFE. AND MR. FORCE-SENSITIVE? THAT'S YOU.
SO, COME, SHAKE HANDS, HAVE DINNER WITH THE NICE LADY, AND WE WALK AWAY WITH AN ACTUAL SENTIENT ANCIENT JEDI.
YOU GET YOUR TEACHER, I GET AN EYEWITNESS TO THE ANCIENT PAST.
I'M NOT SURE...
C'MON, ARE YOU OUT, FARM BOY?
OR ARE YOU IN, *JEDI KNIGHT?*

HELLO, SIR.
GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN! I WOULD OFFER YOU MY HAND, BUT AFTER OUR LAST MEETING...
YOU ELECTROCUTED ME!
WELL, YES. BUT YOU SLICED OFF MY ARM AND STUCK YOUR LIGHTSABER RIGHT THROUGH MY CHEST. WE CAN CALL IT EVEN.
DON'T WORRY. I FAMOUSLY DON'T HOLD GRUDGES.
YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER BEETEE, BEING UNCONSCIOUS AFTER THE AFOREMENTIONED ELECTROCUTION.
YEAH. ARTOO KICKED HIS AFT PORT.
BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP! BLEEEP!
WHAT'S HE SAYING?
BEETEE HAS A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT RECOLLECTION OF THAT SERIES OF EVENTS.

AND I WOULD ASK YOU TO KINDLY REFRAIN FROM AGGRAVATING HIM.
I PERSONALLY DON'T NEED OXYGEN, BUT FLOATING ENDLESSLY IN SPACE AFTER THE LITTLE FELLOW DESTROYS THE SHIP IN A RAGE WOULD BE RATHER TIRESOME...
I WISH WE COULD HAVE TOLD LEIA OR HAN. OR EVEN SANA!
YEAH, ME TOO.
BUT IF YOU DID, THEY'D HAVE STOPPED YOU, OR COME AFTER YOU, AND WE'VE GOT A TINY WINDOW FOR THIS. THE QUEEN ONLY SEES PEOPLE FOR ONE NIGHT A YEAR, AND NEITHER OF US HAVE A YEAR TO WASTE.
WORST OF ALL? I CAN SEE WHY THEY WOULD. THEY'VE *ALL* GOT GOOD REASONS TO DISTRUST ME.
AND THIS IS GOING TO BE ANOTHER.
YEAH, I KNOW...
...BUT NEXT STOP...

The Citadel
Of Ktath'atn.
"KTATH'ATN."
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
"THE MILITARY EXPEDIENT CONSTRUCTION OF LOUD, SHRILL EXHALATIONS" IS THE LITERAL TRANSLATION, BUT THAT DOES LOSE THE POETRY SOMEWHAT.
PERSONALLY, I'D GO WITH "THE SCREAMING CITADEL."

IT'S A PRETTIER NAME IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE, I STRESS.
I HAVE TO ADMIT, "THE SCREAMING CITADEL" DOES LEAN A TRIFLE OMINOUS.
BLEEP!
YES, LET'S PRAY IT'S NOT FALSE ADVERTISING.
I DO SO HATE GETTING MY HOPES UP.
THE VILLAGERS. THEY'RE SO... THIN.
DO WE HAVE ANY FOOD TO SPARE?
YOU ARE SUCH AN ADORABLE SWEETHEART I CANNOT EVEN BRING MYSELF TO CRUSH YOUR SPIRITS.
KRRSANTAN!

MORE SCARED THAN HUNGRY, I GUESS.
I GUESS.
LET'S GET TO THE CITADEL QUICKLY.
THIS PLACE IS CREEPY AS ALL HELL.
WE'RE HERE FOR THE PARTY. I'M DOCTOR APHRA, AND--
NO WOOKIEES.

GRRRGGGGGRRRR!
THE QUEEN HAS... ALLERGIES TO CERTAIN SPECIES.
OKAY, KRRSANTAN, LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO MISS THE PARTY.
HERE'S A DECK OF CARDS. GO MAKE FRIENDS. DON'T KILL ANYONE.
HOW DID YOU EVER MEET THAT GUY?
LONG STORY.
I OWE HIM A LOT.
IT'S GOOD TO KNOW YOU STICK BY YOUR FRIENDS. YOU'RE NOT THAT BAD. I ME--
I OWE HIM A LOT OF MONEY.
OH... ACTUALLY, TALKING ABOUT HOW PEOPLE MET...THAT REMINDS ME...
HOW DID YOU FIND ME, ANYWAY?
ER...

Temporary Rebel Outpost, Horox III.
OH GREAT, SANA.
PLAY HER MESSAGE AGAIN.
AFFIRMATIVE.
HEY, SANA. I...I'M SORRY TO BARGE INTO YOUR LIFE, BUT I NEED TO SEE YOU. PERSONAL STUFF. NO, I'M NOT IN TROUBLE AGAIN.
WHERE ARE YOU NOW? IT'D BE GOOD TO CATCH UP. THAT JAIL-BREAK WASN'T AN IDEAL TIME TO CHAT...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE, SANA.
THAT YOU TOLD HER OR THAT YOU'RE LYING HERE WONDERING WHERE SHE IS...
HEY, SANA.
THE PRINCESS IS HAVING SOME PROBLEM WITH LUKE'S DUMB CLANKER...

OKAY, ESSFOR. WE'RE GOING TO TRY THIS ONE LAST TIME...
...WHERE HAS LUKE GONE?
BLLLOOOOOPPP
"I CANNOT TELL."
YES, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO TELL US.
AND I DON'T CARE IF HE SAYS HE'S FINE AND NOT TO WORRY. TELL ME!
IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS I REALLY MISS THREEPIO.
GETTING HIM TO START TALKING WAS NEVER A PROBLEM.
ANY IDEAS, SANA?
YEAH, I MAY HAVE...
BLOOOOOOOOOOOP!
OKAY, ESSFOR...
...DID LUKE GO BY HIMSELF?
"NO."

WHO WAS LUKE WITH?
BIBBIDTY!
WHAT DID HE SAY?
"DOCTOR APHRA."
GAHK!
HEY, YOU GUYS LET HER GO, NOT ME. THIS ISN'T MY MISTAKE, FOR ONCE.
WHY THE HELL WOULD LUKE GO OFF WITH SOMEONE THAT DERANGED?
OH, I DON'T KNOW, HAN. MAYBE FOR EXACTLY THE SAME REASON AS LAST TIME?
SHE'S KIDNAPPED HIM!
COULD SHE REPROGRAM A DROID TO KEEP IT SECRET?
IN HER SLEEP.
AND MAKE A SLOPPY MISTAKE NOT COVERING IT UP?
PUT IT LIKE THIS, HAN...
...NOT FULLY CONSIDERING THE CONSEQUENCES OF HER ACTIONS?
IT'S ALL THAT APHRA EVER DOES.

UGH...AND I THOUGHT HITTING THE THERMAL EXHAUST PORT WAS DIFFICULT...
GET A MOVE ON!
HAVE YOU NEVER WORE A SPAVAT BEFORE?
COME HERE!
YOU NEED ANOTHER HALF TURN OR YOU'LL HAVE A CORUSCANTIAN TWIST, MASTER APHRA...
I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING, TRIP.
THAT IS A MATTER OF OPINION.
THERE YOU GO. YOU LOOK GREAT.
VERY SOPHISTICATED... FOR A FARM BOY.

I'M NOT JUST A FARM BOY.
I KNOW. LET'S HOPE THE QUEEN SEES THAT, TOO...
DROIDS, GUARD THE ROOMS, JUST IN CASE.
WHY ARE YOU NOT ALL DRESSED UP?
YOU'RE THE MAIN ATTRACTION.
I RUB OFF THE MUD, AND I CAN BE VERY DISTRACTING.
I, UH...
I BELIEVE THAT'S TATOOINE BOY FOR "APHRA, YOU LOOK GREAT ANYWAY," MASTER APHRA.
DON'T TEASE HIM.
THAT'S MY JOB.

WOW.
YEAH, WHO IN THE UNIVERSE WOULD EVER THINK YOU WERE A YOKEL...?
OH, YOU ARE *ADORABLE* WHEN YOU'RE INDIGNANT.

RIGHT-- FOLLOW MY LEAD. UNLESS THINGS ARE REALLY BAD, DON'T GET THAT LIGHTSABER OUT.
I HAVE BEEN KEEPING BEING A JEDI SECRET FOR A WHILE...
...NOT THAT I AM REALLY A JEDI. THAT HAS TO CHANGE. I MEAN... THE A.I. JEDI. WHAT WAS HE LIKE?
I ONLY MET IT BRIEFLY. HE HAS... ER...STRONG OPINIONS.
YOU'LL LIKE HIM. LET'S MINGLE.
WITH THE QUEEN'S GIFT, WE WILL RISE UP AGAINST THE EMPIRE!
THAT'S AMAZING! WELL, I KNOW THE REBELLION CAN--
THEN BRING THE DOMINION OF THE EZARAA ACROSS THE STARS!
AND CONSUME THE FLESH OF ALL THE LESSER SPECIES!
IT'S BEEN GREAT MEETING YOU.
THESE PEOPLE ARE CRAZY.
THEY ARE. THERE'S NO WAY THEY HAVE ENOUGH OF THESE AMAZING CANAPES FOR EVERYONE.
WHERE'S IS THE QUEEN? AH...

PRESENTING HER MAJESTY!
SHE WELCOMES ALL, AND LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING THE NOVELTY OF YOUR PRESENTATIONS!
SHE HOPES THEY WILL ENLIVEN HER JADED PALATE!

I PRESENT A HYROPODIC AETHERBEAST, NATIVE ONLY TO THREE BIOMES ON YOLTHANI VI.

THE QUEEN IS INTRIGUED.
SHE WILL CONSIDER YOUR REQUEST FURTHER.

RECOVERED FROM THE LABS OF THE GENE-HERETIC CYLO, A CYBERANIMATE FLOP!

NO, THE QUEEN IS NOT INTERESTED IN SUCH THINGS.
WITH GREAT REGRET, SHE WILL NOT CONSIDER YOUR REQUEST.

BEHOLD, A MICROFLORA EFFUSION OF POLYSATYRS.
I...I HAVE MAGNIFYING EQUIPMENT. I CAN SHOW...

THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED.
STAY. YOUR REQUEST WILL BE CONSIDERED.

OKAY, HERE WE GO...
AND WE PRESENT...A VERY INTERESTING TATOOINE FARM BOY.
REJECTED!

AND THE QUEEN NOTES THAT SHE HAS CERTAIN STANDARDS.
SHE DOES NOT EASILY TAKE OFFENSE FOR ABUSE OF HER HOSPITALITY, BUT IT IS ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY.
HAH! THE BOY? HOW FOOLISH ARE YOU?
THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT HIM.
JUST LEAVE HIM ALONE.
NO, I THINK NOT. I ACT AS I WISH.
LEAVE HER ALONE!
WHY, FARM BOY?
WHAT COULD YOU DO TO A WARRIOR SUCH AS I?
DON'T PUSH ME!

WOW, I GUESS SOMEONE ATE TOO MANY OF THE CANAPÉS.
THOUGH WHO CAN BLAME THE EZARAA, RIGHT? THEY WERE DELIC--
I MUST APOLOGIZE.
ALL GUESTS MUST LEAVE, IMMEDIATELY.
SADLY, THAT INCLUDES ALL THOSE WHOM THE QUEEN HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN.
ALL WILL RECEIVE A PAYMENT FOR THEIR TIME. WE UNDERSTAND THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT.
THE QUEEN WILL BE HERE NEXT YEAR, AS ALWAYS.
THE FARM BOY AND HIS COMPANION ARE WELCOME TO STAY. GO, SLEEP.
THE QUEEN WILL HEAR YOUR REQUEST IN THE MORNING.
GOOD WORK ON THE "DON'T LET THEM KNOW I'M A JEDI."
I'M SORRY. I...
WAS THAT OKAY?
"OKAY"?! LUKE, I'M TEASING! TRUST ME, THAT WAS GREAT!
I KNOW THE LOOK IN THE EYE WHEN SOMEONE IS INTERESTED, AND THE QUEEN IS VERY INTERESTED IN YOU.

SO MUCH POWER. SO LITTLE EXPERIENCE.
PERFECT.
SHALL WE BRING HIM TO YOU?
NO. WE NEED TO BE AT OUR FULL STRENGTH FOR SUCH A CONFRONTATION.
AND THE HOUR IS UPON US...
YOU MUST GATHER MY HARVEST.

NOW...

...FEED ME.
OH, IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE I LAST TASTED JEDI.

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NEXT ISSUE: